

REMARKS

This Amendment is submitted in reply to the Office Action dated September 30, 2003. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and further examination of the patent application under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111.

Upon entry of the foregoing Amendment, Claims 1-2, 5, 7-10, 12, 25-30 and 32-35 are pending in the application. The amendments are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested. Based on the above amendment and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all outstanding rejections.

Summary of the Examiner's Rejections

Claims 1-4, 7, 30 and 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shukla (US 6,458,275) in view of Thurn (US 4,076,550).

Claims 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shukla (US 6,458,275) in view of Thurn (US 4,076,550) and in further view of Perlman (US 5,858,770).

Claim 25 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shukla (US 6,458,275) in view of Thurn (US 4,076,550) and in further view of Merz (US 4,871,590).

Claims 26 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shukla (US 6,458,275) in view of Thurn (US 4,076,550) and in further view of Boyce (US 4,284,542).

Claim 31 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 8-10, 12, 27-29, 31 and 33-35 were allowed.

Summary of Amendment

Applicants have cancelled Claims 3-4 and 31 (without prejudice) and amended Claims 1-2 and 30 to more particularly define the present invention.

Remarks regarding § 103(a) rejections

Independent Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). Applicants have amended independent Claim 1 to include the limitations of "plasma treated polymeric material" and "pyrolized glass" that have been indicated by the Examiner to be allowable subject matter. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the outstanding rejection and allowance of amended independent Claim 1 and associated dependent Claims 2, 5, 7 and 25-26.

Independent Claim 30 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). Applicants have amended independent Claim 30 to include the limitations recited in the objected to dependent Claim 31 (now canceled). The Examiner indicated that original dependent Claim 31 contained allowable subject matter. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the outstanding rejection and allowance of amended independent Claim 30 and associated dependent Claim 32.

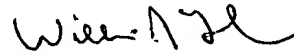
Conclusion

Applicants respectfully submit that all of the stated grounds of rejections have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of all outstanding rejections and allowance of pending Claims 1-2, 5, 7-10, 12, 25-30 and 32-35.

If the Examiner believes, for any reasons, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

It is believed that no fee is due. If this is incorrect, the Commissioner is authorized to charge any fees which may be required for this paper to Deposit Account No. 50-1481.

Respectfully submitted,



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